



**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM**

**FOR**

**POLICY RESEARCH**

**ECOWAS Initiative on Youth Leadership Development in  
Energy**

*Submissions open on 1 October to 30 November 2015*



WITH FUNDING FROM  
**AUSTRIAN  
DEVELOPMENT  
COOPERATION**



## 1. Introduction

The ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) is calling for proposals for its Research Grant Program, under the ECOWAS initiative on Youth Leadership Development in Energy.

The Program aims to support teams of young men and women to conduct and develop well-researched, policy relevant academic papers designed to contribute to the transformation of the energy sector in the ECOWAS region.

Research proposals must be ambitious and innovative, and aimed at generating new knowledge for decision making. Proposals must demonstrate how and why the results from the research would be of relevance to policy makers and the direct beneficiaries of the study and proposed policy measures.

Through the program, a team, consisting of at least two people<sup>1</sup>, will receive a grant amount of not more than 1500 EUR to contribute to the formulation of evidence-based energy policies in the region.

### 1.1 Objective

In line with the goal of the initiative on Youth Leadership Development in Energy, which works to prepare the region's young men and women to become globally competitive energy leaders in the future, the Research Grant Program has as its objective to build and strengthen the capacity of young West Africans to contribute and participate actively in the energy discourse at the national and regional levels and, thus, ensure that the youth has a say in the way energy development is shaped in West Africa.

## 2. Advantages of the Program

Achieving universal energy access is a top priority for the ECOWAS region. With over half of its population lacking access to energy, energy policies continue to revolve around closing the huge energy deficit - securing the investments to match its growing energy demands and ensuring that the much needed energy resources are available, accessible and affordable to both the male and female population of region. Environmental sustainability is not left out in the region's pursuit for universal energy access. With ECOWAS commitment to the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL)

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<sup>1</sup> Research teams should aim for gender balance or at least a one-third representation of a particular gender group.

initiative, countries of the region have developed and adopted innovative policies<sup>2</sup> and policy instruments<sup>3</sup> to contribute towards the global objectives of ensuring universal access to modern energy services; doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

With the ongoing, rapid transformation globally, and particularly in the ECOWAS regional energy space, the importance of having relevant, scientifically supported knowledge to aid in decision making cannot be over emphasized.

By increasing the knowledge of decision-makers, science has played a key role in shaping the energy landscape, influencing decisions to cater for the needs of the present and, even, future generations. For the ECOWAS region, with issues of data availability and scarcity of country-specific research studies, the need to stimulate and cultivate the development of scientific, yet policy relevant, research projects have never been more pressing, especially in light of the region's sustainable development ambitions.

### 3. Eligibility

The Research Grant Program will support research proposals that aim at employing scientific methodologies<sup>4</sup> in finding solutions to topical energy issues in ECOWAS Member States. Research proposals employing a multidisciplinary approach will be favoured.

#### **a) To be eligible:**

Research teams must comprise of young West African researchers of not more than 35 years of age. Participants should at least be students in an institution of higher education (in the region or outside the region).

Research teams with a Master or PhD degree holder, or equivalent, will be given priority.

Membership to the Network of Young Energy Researchers is required for team members after selection of their proposal (see **Annex A:** for more information on the Network of Young Energy Researchers).

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<sup>2</sup> These include the ECOWAS Policy for Renewable Energy and the ECOWAS Policy for Energy Efficiency; the ECOWAS Policy for Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access. Moreover a number of countries have developed their own RE and EE policies. Some countries like Ghana, Cape Verde and the Gambia have RE laws.

<sup>3</sup> A number of countries have developed Feed-in tariffs (FiTs), established regulatory frameworks for their implementation and

<sup>4</sup> These may include branches of science related to: Earth and Space, Social Science, Life Science, Physical Science, Formal Science.

The young researchers must be supervised by a Project Advisor<sup>5</sup> in partnership with an institution likely to use the research results.

**b) Countries of research coverage include:**

- Benin
- Burkina Faso
- Cabo Verde
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Ivory Coast
- Liberia
- Mali
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Togo

**c) Eligible costs**

The maximum grant allocated to each research proposal is one thousand, five hundred euro (1,500 EUR).

The grant will cover costs related to:

- Fieldwork, travel
- Communication/documentation
- Minor Equipment
- Software
- Office supplies, copying/printing
- Support (research assistants/respondents)

Payments will be made in three instalments:

- 50% upon signing of contract;
- 25% after final submission and acceptance of manuscript<sup>6</sup>
- 25% upon acceptance of the research paper for publication by Editorial team

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<sup>5</sup> Advisors should be academics well accomplished in their field, demonstrated through publications in highly ranked journals.

<sup>6</sup> Final submission of manuscripts means that all the comments made by the Editorial Team have been incorporated.

If the paper is accepted for publication, Research Advisors will be paid a sum of 500 EUR, separate from the research budget.

The research papers will be published electronically on the ECOWAS Energy Journal and made available on the ECREEE e-library. Manuscripts should range from 4,500-10,000 words. Papers of up to 10,000 words should have abridged versions of not more than 4,500 words. The word count does not include the abstract, figures, tables, appendices, footnotes, acknowledgements, and references.

Furthermore, researchers will be given the opportunity to share their findings and recommendations at conferences and workshops organized by ECREEE.

## **4. Selection Criteria**

The proposals will be evaluated based on the:

- 1) scientific quality of the proposed research
- 2) policy relevance
- 3) competency level of the research team
- 4) gender balance of the team

For Scientific quality, proposals will be judged on:

- a) Strength of the hypothesis, theories and/or research questions
- b) Appropriateness of the methodology and research design
- c) Applicability of the research and its impact.
- d) Originality and innovation
- e) Multidisciplinary approach

For policy relevance, the proposals will be evaluated based on its contribution towards solving pressing energy issues.

Specifically,

- a) Relevance of the research to current or planned policy instruments and legislation.
- b) Contribution to the body of knowledge in energy policy formulation and competence of decision-makers

The third group of criteria will focus on the ability of the research team to successfully execute the proposed project, considering if the team (or a member of the team) has executed a project of similar scope.

Evaluation will be based on the:

- a) Qualifications, skills and competencies of the research team
- b) Feasibility of the research timetable and suitability of the budget

## 5. Submission of Application

The following should be sent along with the research proposal:

- A cover letter;
- A supporting letter from an organisation (public or private) interested in the research and that may use the results of research;
- A letter from the Advisor committed to supervise the research;
- Detailed curriculum vitae of each member of the team (including the Advisor).

The research proposal should state:

- Title
- Brief Introduction
- Background and statement of the problem
- Research question or hypothesis, aim and objectives
- Policy relevance (highlighting its significance, applicability and originality)
- Study design (type of study)
- Possible barriers and limitations to the research
- Data collection methods and instruments
- Data analysis methods
- Research period - Timetable for completion of the project, i.e. schedule of activities
- Participants in the study – e.g. stakeholders to be consulted
- Resources required for the study, including budget
- References
- Appendices

The duration of the study (including submission of the final manuscript) should not exceed 12 months.

The submissions opens at **09h00 Cabo Verde Standard Time (GMT - 1) on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2015 and closes on 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2015 at 09h00 Cabo Verde Standard Time (GMT -1).**

**Applications should be submitted electronically to [researchgrant@ecreee.org](mailto:researchgrant@ecreee.org) by 30<sup>th</sup> of November, 2015.**

## 6. Application Review Process

ECREEE as fund manager will receive all project applications through the online application process and together with the proposal review committee will review the projects along the criteria set out in the Annexes and will present a report for consideration to the Steering Committee. In brief the process described below will be followed by the ECREEE:

**Step 1:** The Call for Proposals is disseminated through websites of ECOWAS institutions (and programs), email messages and media.

**Step 2:** The proposals will be received and reviewed by Editorial Team against the eligibility criteria.

**Step 3:** Proposals will be selected and approved for funding. Applicants are updated on the outcome of the process.

**Step 4:** Contract signed and initial funds disbursed in accordance with section 3c of this document.